

ANDEAN COUNTERDRUG INITIATIVE BACKGROUND

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Andean Counterdrug Initiative:

Countries:

- Colombia; Peru; Bolivia; Ecuador; Brazil; Venezuela; Panama

Key achievements from 2002-2004:

- Aerial eradication:
 - Reduced coca cultivation by 33% in Colombia;
 - Reduced coca cultivation by 16% in Andean region in 2003, and by an additional 5% in 2004;
 - Opium poppy cultivation in Colombia dropped 52% in 2004, the third straight year of decline.
- Alternative development programs
 - Since 2000 have supported more than 63,000 hectares of legal crops;
 - Resulted in the manual eradication of 23,200 hectares of illicit crops (coca and opium poppy).
- Security
- President Uribe has now established a permanent government presence in all of Colombia's 1,098 municipalities for the first time in the country's history.
 - Police units have returned to over 158 local communities;
 - Colombian National Police have organized and deployed 25 (of a projected 62) 150-man mobile squadrons, totaling 16,500 police to reinforce security in the rural conflict zones;
 - Late 2002, President Uribe reinstituted the 1993 conscription law that allows for the recruitment and training of community based "peasant" soldiers;

Eradication in Colombia - Unprecedented commitment to aerial eradication in 2004-2005.

- Coca: 127,000 hectares sprayed in 2003; 136,551 hectares in 2004; 95,000 hectares in Jan-June 2005;
 - Crop reduced to 114,000 hectares, from 169,800 hectares 3 years ago;
 - Reduced coca cultivation by 33% in 2001-2004;
 - Reduced potential production by over 7% for export quality cocaine in 2004 (39% since 2001);
 - Manually eradicated over 8,000 hectares in 2003.

- Opium poppy (source of heroin): almost 3,000 hectares sprayed in 2003; 3,061 hectares in 2004; 936 hectares in first 5 months of 2005.
 - Reduced cultivation by 52% in 2004, 10 % in 2003 and 25 % in 2002;
 - Reduced potential pure heroin production by 51 % in 2004;
 - Manually eradicated almost 1,000 hectares in 2004;

Interdiction – Increased efforts by Colombia in 2004-2005.

- Seized 178 metric tons of cocaine in 2004 (up from 114 metric tons in 2003); and 71.7 metric tons in Jan-May 2005..
- Instituted a wealth tax that generated over \$1.1 billion for defense – boosted police and military spending from 2.5 % of GDP in 2000 to 5.5 % in 2004.
 - President
- Air Bridge Denial program
 - Was restarted in August 2003 – safely interdicted more aircraft and seized more cocaine in 2003 than in any previous year before ABD was halted in 2001;
 - Forced down, immobilized and/or destroyed 21 suspected narcotics trafficking aircraft in 2004;
 - Has seized 9.7 metric tons of illicit drugs since resuming the program;
 - Resulted in changed narcotics trafficking patterns;

Organizational Attack on Narcoterrorists

- Streamlined extradition procedures have resulted in over 200 extraditions since Uribe's inauguration on Aug 7, 2002).
 - Sent first ever FARC members to the U.S. and several ex-Cali Cartel leaders.
- Passed a new law on asset forfeiture – reduced the processing time for assets seized from known narcoterrorists.
- Military operations against illegal armed groups since Uribe's inauguration (Aug 2002-May 2005):
 - 7,400 FTO members have been demobilized individually (a further 5,284 collectively as part of the AUC peace process);
 - 27,694 captured;
 - 6,605, killed.
- Upon the cessation of the demilitarized zone in February 2002, the Colombian military has reoccupied the main urban areas in the former zone.
- Increased military pressure resulted in the December 2002 unilateral ceasefire declaration by the United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), the largest of the paramilitary groups.

Counterterrorism

- Security
 - Colombian Ministry of Defense figures show terrorism cases were down 24% in 2003, 44% in 2004 and are down a further 37% through May of this year;
 - Since December 2002 and through May 2005 Colombia has seen decreases in homicide of 37.1% (to the lowest rate per 100,000 population in 18 years), massacres of 62.6%, kidnappings of 67.2%, and acts of terrorism of 64.2%;

- Established a network of over one million informants to prevent terrorist attacks;
- Successful preparation of 99 pilots and 154 mechanics and crew chiefs since 1999 to support 33 UH-1N helicopters; (?)
- A Gallup poll conducted in March 2005 shows that 83% of Colombians have a favorable view of the country's military (a higher approval rating than that of the Catholic Church) and 73% support Plan Colombia;
- Real spending on defense has increased every year under Uribe. According to the most recent Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Finance figures, Colombian spending on defense has grown over 30% since 2001.
- **Narcoterrorism**
 - In 2004, more than 11,000 narcoterrorists were captured;
 - More than 7,000 terrorists have deserted their organizations since President Uribe took office;
- **Infrastructure Security/Pipeline Security**
 - \$100 million for US forces-led training and equipping re: Cano Limon pipeline;
 - Pipeline provides major revenue for Colombia representing 25% of total exports;
 - Sharp decline of attacks on pipeline, from 177 in 2000 to 35 in 2003 and 20 in 2004.
- **Hostages – Progress in 2004**
 - Colombia's murder rate dropped 14.2% (22.3% drop in first 5 months of 2005);
 - Terrorist incidents dropped 42.4% in 2004 (37.1% drop in first 5 mos. of 2005);
- **Extending Rule of Law**
 - Training of Colombian police units in neglected municipalities;
 - Colombian police units in all 1,098 municipalities for the first time ever.

Colombia “Byrd Caps”

- Administration's request to increase this year was approved:
 - To a total of 800 military personnel;
 - To a total of 600 civilian contractor personnel.
- **Why Caps were increased:**
 - Until recently we were able to work comfortably within the ceilings. The increased pace of implementation for programs we support being undertaken by the Uribe Administration offers an opportunity for real progress towards our goals.
 - Previous cap levels hurt management efficiency and prevented full implementation of programs.
 - Average number of US citizen civilian contractors and US military grew as programs were expanded, implemented, and re-started (Air Bridge Denial) or new programs (Anti-Kidnapping Initiative) were begun.
 - During 2003, the number of US military varied from 128 to 396; that of US citizen civilian contractors from 246 to 400. In 2004 number of US military was between 126 to 388; that of US citizen civilian contractors from 271 to 396. In 2005 so far the highest daily number reached was 512 military personnel and 405 civilian contractors.

- Legislated requirements, including human rights vetting and the prohibition on combat have been maintained.
- Continuing Department of State programs executed by civilian contractors as part of the plan to succeed in Colombia include: the Airbridge Denial Program, Justice Training, Maintenance and Repair, and USAID.

The Colombian Armed Forces vs. Paramilitary units

- Arrests, combat operations, and intelligence activities by the Colombian Armed Forces against paramilitaries increased in 2004.
- Colombia's police and military captured 4,836 paramilitaries in 2004, an increase of 53% over the 3,166 paramilitaries captured in 2003. As of May of this year, 1,399 have been captured;
- 558 paramilitaries were killed in combat in 2004, an increase of 61% over the 346 killed in 2003. As of May of this year, 167 have been killed.

Human Rights

- Kidnappings were down 34.5% in 2004, and are down a further 60.9% through May of this year..
- Homicides were down 14.2% in 2004, and are down a further 22.3% through May of this year.
- Colombia's illegal armed groups committed 46 collective homicides in 2004, compared to 73 in 2003. In the first 5 months of this year, they were down a further 11.5%.
- The number of victims affected of collective homicides dropped, 47.8%, to 263 in 2004 from 504 in 2003. Through May of this year, they dropped by a further 1%.
- 42 labor leaders were assassinated in 2004, compared to 47 in 2003 and 99 in 2002. In the first 5 month of 2005, 7 labor leaders were assassinated (down 71% on the same period of 2004).
- There were 137,315 newly displaced persons in 2004, a drop of 67.5% compared to the 422,750 persons displaced in 2002.
- The Commission of Jurists reported that of 2,500 human rights allegations in Colombia over the past year, less than 2 % were against the Colombian military. This compares to between 40 and 50% of the allegations just six or seven years ago.
- The Colombian military is establishing a judge-advocate general corps, as the U.S. military has, with U.S. Government support.